



The Director's Corner

Dr. Keith Schafer

The FY 2009 DMH budget

The 2008 Legislative session ended May 16 and the state budget approved by legislators included funding for the programs and services of the Department of Mental Health. Included in the budget is a three-percent cost-of-living increase for state employees and a three-percent increase for our community providers as well. The work of state staff and the employees of community providers is the foundation of the mental health service delivery system and this increase is much deserved. Other items funded in the FY 2009 budget include:

- Autism service expansion - \$7.3 million
- Serving families of returning veterans with mental health problems and transition services for homeless veterans - \$2.2 million
- Repositioning for critical clinical and direct-care positions - \$1.7 million
- Increased medication costs - \$1.6 million
- Increased food and medical costs at DMH facilities - \$609,000
- Methamphetamine treatment expansion - \$900,000

Not all of our requests were able to be funded given the availability of funds to the state. Most notably, school-based mental health services; alcohol and drug abuse treatment for parents of children taken into DSS custody; and Assertive Community Treatment Teams did not receive funding.

The overall DMH budget now stands at \$1.17 billion in state and federal funds. This is, of course, a tremendous amount. The need for services provided by DMH continues to grow. There are persons waiting to get help for themselves or a family member. All of us have an obligation to be good stewards of these funds and ensure as best we can that we are doing all we can to help those who come to us for assistance.

2008 Legislation Update

Legislation enacted by the General Assembly during the 2008 session will increase the focus of the Department of Mental Health on Autism Spectrum Disorder and the care and safety of persons we serve.

Senate Bill 768 creates the Missouri Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as well as the Office of Autism Services within the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. These were recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Autism, which held hearings throughout the state in 2007. The Centers for Disease Control report that one in every 150 children born today has ASD. In the Division of MRDD, approximately one-third of individuals receiving services have some diagnosis of ASD.

The 24-member commission is charged with developing a statewide plan for ASD. The Department of Mental Health will provide support for the commission. Creation of the Office of Autism essentially puts in statute what is current practice in the Division of MRDD. The fiscal year 2009 budget includes funding for two FTE to staff the office.

Senate Bill 1081 also was passed this session. This legislation strengthens the criteria regarding quality assurance and oversight of MRDD community programs serving persons with developmental disabilities. It also establishes a process to generate an additional \$3.6 million annually in federal funds. Part of this increase will go to fund the quality assurance efforts in the MRDD.

House Bill 1791 and **Senate Bill 1177** were identical bills that passed and they include Licensed Professional Counselors in the definition of "mental health professional." This change allows LPC to make civil commitment assessments in the mental health system.

The department supported bills filed in the House and Senate to change the name of the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities to the Division of Developmental Disabilities. These bills were not successful.

Additional information on the 2008 session is available on the DMH website, at

www.dmh.mo.gov/diroffice/legis/update.htm

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The Watercooler

Your brief monthly update on what's happening across DMH. For a full update on all DMH organizations and news visit DMH Online or visit the blog, [Missouri DMH Connections](#).

Nominate your team NOW for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

It is time to showcase your team's hard work and successes! Has your team reduced costs, improved a process, saved time, or provided other important benefits or accomplishments? If yes, celebrate those successes by nominating your DMH team for the highly prestigious 2008 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity! The Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity (GAQP) recognizes teams that champion service excellence, efficiency, innovation, technology, process improvement, and employee development in Missouri State Government. All projects must meet requirements of effectiveness, responsiveness, and efficiency of such magnitude that would make the project a model of excellence in state government nationally. More information on the GAQP is available at

<http://www.training.oa.mo.gov/erp/index.shtml>.

In 2007, awards were presented by Governor Matt Blunt to the following teams. You can learn more about the 2007 winners and winners from prior years at <http://www.training.oa.mo.gov/erp/index.shtml>

This is an opportunity for all agency employees to nominate a team for this prestigious award! Nominations must be made using the attached Nomination Form. Forms need to be completed and mailed along with all supporting documents to Janet Gordon in Central Office by Noon on Wednesday, July 2, 2008. Electronic nominations and documents may also be submitted by Wednesday, July 2, 2008, to Janet at janet.gordon@dmh.mo.gov. Approved nominations will be submitted to the state program coordinator at the Office of Administration and the winners will be chosen in August.

St. Louis Regional Office gets new director

Suellen White is the new director of the St. Louis Regional Office – North. Suellen comes to us from the Ohio Department of MRDD and has more than 23 years experience working within the field of MRDD. Suellen will start her new duties July 1, 2008.

Anita Contreras, who has been wearing two hats as the director of St. Louis RO and the Eastern District Administrator, will assume her duties as Eastern District Administrator full time when the new director starts.

cyberbullying

using the Internet, social pages, cell phones or other devices to send or post malicious text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another.

Being a victim of cyberbullying can be a common and hurtful experience. Luckily, there are things that can be done to stop cyberbullying and stay cyber-safe!

TIPS FOR COPING

1. **Watch what you say;** if you wouldn't say it in person, **DON'T** say it on-line.
2. **Stay safe;** keep personal information personal, share your phone number, address, etc. only with friends you've met face to face and trust.
3. **Break the Chain;** passing along hurtful or unkind messages -- even as a joke -- is **NEVER** okay.
4. **Don't take it;** you can block offensive message senders, delete messages from unfamiliar addresses or report them to your electronic service provider.
5. **Ask for help;** if you know cyberbullying is going on, talk about it with a trusted adult -- a parent, teacher or co-worker. Everyone needs a little help sometimes!

If you or someone you know is being cyberbullied, remember

It is OKAY to ask for Help!

KUTO Teen Helpline: (314 or 888) 644-5886
Rainbow Youth Hotline: (877) 542-8984

Gateway Youth Suicide Prevention Resources Partnership

a Community Collaboration to Reduce the Incidence and Impact of Suicide in the Eastern Region of Missouri

For Information call 314.963.7571

Supported by the Missouri Department of Mental Health

Source: www.ncpc.org & www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.org



Meet your Co-Employees of the Month

MARCH 2008



Doris Schroeder

Personnel Analyst I
Higginsville Habilitation Center

Why is Doris the EOM?

Doris has worked in the personnel department since 1976. Over the years Doris has put forth a great deal of effort to know rules and procedures of personnel inside and out. She is always professional and respectful as she manages many responsibilities that impact each and every employee. Her work is accurate, timely, and precise. She puts a great deal of effort into making sure her work, as well as the work of others that she is responsible to review, is error-free and precise.

She takes care of important details that could otherwise lead to payroll and procedural problems. She keeps track of very important personnel issues for each individual unit, including issues that impact individual employees in that unit.

Thoughts about Doris from her coworkers:

"Doris presents a professional 'old school' approach that is often not seen these days in a work setting."

"If there is something that she does not know off the top of her head, she always puts forth the extra effort to find out the answer."

"She strives very hard to approach each issue as positively as possible to avoid confrontational situations."

**Congratulations, Doris, and
thanks for all your hard work!**

MARCH 2008



Patricia McClure

Behavior Technician Supervisor
Southeast Missouri
Mental Health Center

Why is Pat the EOM?

Pat is always looking for ways to improve patient care. She has initiated new treatment programs on the MIDD Unit and come up with individualized techniques which help patients de-escalate. She freely expresses new ideas for improving treatment outcomes, even though this often means that demands on her time are increased.


Thoughts about Pat from her coworkers:

"Pat is always willing to pitch in and help out, even on days when her own schedule is heavy."

"She is always optimistic about people's potential and motivates them to do better. She is an inspiration to work with."

"Pat is patient and courteous with others, even in times of stress."

**Congratulations, Pat, and
thanks for all your hard work!**



July 14, 2008 Show Me You Care
About Suicide Prevention
Truman Hotel Jefferson City, Missouri
Third Annual Conference

For more information, go to:
www.dmh.mo.gov/cps/issues/suicide/conference/2008/



- Friday, July 4 - Independence Day Holiday
- Monday, July 14 - Suicide Prevention Conference
- August 7-17 - Missouri State Fair
- October 15, 2009 - Deadline for 2009 Mental Health Champion nominations

getting *Inspired*

Every day the employees at DMH are changing lives for the better. You all are awesome! This story was submitted by Judy Wanko, St. Louis Regional Office Education Coordinator.



Judy and her "little."

A Partnership of Value

Thanks to the encouragement and support of Department of Mental Health, Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities' Administration, I was given the opportunity to volunteer with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri. As a mentor (or "Big") I was matched to a wonderful 4th grader ("little") through the organization's **School Based** program.

Bigs matched in the School Based program meet their Littles for an hour or so, two to four times a month. They meet their Littles at the child's school, either during the day or in an after-school setting. Some matches spend time 1-on-1 while others participate in group activities. Bigs can help with homework, play games or just talk with their Little.

I'd like to tell you about my experience in the program in hopes that you too will seize the opportunity to become a "Big."

My "little" and I have been enjoying lunch together since January. Once a week, usually Monday's, unless my schedule conflicts, I drive a few miles from my office to meet my "little" at her school. We typically have lunch

in the library where we converse about our prior week's activities and share expectations we have about our week ahead. Getting to know my "little" has been easy as she proudly shares stories about herself and her family. It's easy for me to identify with her as she has some of the same interests as my granddaughter – Big fans of Hannah Montana & High School Musical!

As her mentor, I too share my personal life stories. I often speak of my sister Robin who utilizes a wheelchair for mobility. Since my "little" recently began using a wheelchair for mobility as well, I find sharing little tidbits of information about Robin to be very helpful and encouraging to my "little."

One of the first activities that we shared was reading the book "Aunt Katie's Visit," by Katie Rodriguez Banister. My 'little' enjoyed reading the book and has plans to read it to her classmates. As the book explains, having a disability does not mean that a person cannot do things for themselves. In her book, Aunt Katie talks about many situations where she overcomes the challenges of everyday life through self determination, the use of adaptive equipment and support from her personal attendant, friends and family.

My "little" also chooses other activities such as playing a board or card game. I taught my "little" how to play the card game, "Kings in the Corner." She said she liked playing it so much that she went home and taught her mother how to play!

Lunchtime goes by so quickly when you're having fun! I get back into my car and head back to the office often wondering what the other drivers on the road think of me when they drive past. The time I spend with my "little" always puts a smile on my face and a boost of energy in my soul. I thank God for this opportunity and for my new "little."

Are you or your company or school interested in getting involved? If so, please contact the Big Brother Big Sister Mentor Recruitment Department at 314-361-5900. For more information on their programs, you can also access their website at <http://www.bbbsemo.org>